

PUBLIC USE

INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION

CONTEXT: Most information and orientation services on Cape Cod are independently provided by chambers of commerce in the numerous communities and by the National Park Service. There is no integrated information system that helps visitors understand all the options available to them in a unified and coordinated manner.

For visitors to the national seashore, information is provided at the Salt Pond and Province Lands visitor centers and the headquarters building. During the summer information is also available at the six beach entrance stations. General information about Cape Cod is not tied into any online computer systems that visitors may access from their homes, although Cape Cod National Seashore, chambers of commerce, and many other visitor-related service organizations have home pages on Internet.

Because the national seashore and local communities often give information about their own facilities and attractions, it is difficult for visitors to understand the full range of opportunities available on Cape Cod. Secondary sources, such as commercial tour operators, travel agents, and guidebooks, sometimes provide people with inaccurate or out-of-date information. In other instances, information is duplicated and would be more effectively presented at facilities nearer the attractions or at a regional visitor center.

Signs directing visitors to the national seashore are inadequate, and visitors often get lost or arrive at town beaches designated for residents only. Visitors also congregate in certain areas, not knowing that noncrowded facilities are available elsewhere.

- ☐ **GOAL:** Provide opportunities for the public to have access to a variety of accurate and up-to-date trip planning and orientation information about the national seashore and Cape Cod before leaving home.

STRATEGIES: *An integrated and coordinated information system* — A well-integrated, coordinated information system will be developed in partnership with Cape Cod communities and regional entities to help visitors better plan their trips before leaving home and while visiting the Cape. The system will include a unified yet diverse system of information distributed by various means. Information to potential visitors at their homes will primarily be distributed by mail, telephone, and computer, while assistance on the Cape will be available through coordinated sign, kiosk, and exhibit systems, as well as informational and educational programs. The purpose of the information system will be to provide visitors with adequate pre-trip information, as well as detailed information so visitors can make

informed decisions about how, when, and where to experience the Cape. As part of the system, the following will be provided:

- *Initial information* — A cooperative effort will be undertaken with towns and other entities on the Cape to provide information to people related to services, facilities, seasonal variety, places to visit, and sensitive resources that can be affected by their activities. Off-Cape visitors will be given information about alternatives to car travel, the best access routes, alternative destinations on the Outer Cape, and shoulder season activities. Efforts will be made to make this information available to people at home as they are planning their trips. As a partner in developing a coordinated information system, the National Park Service will supply technical information to other entities about national seashore facilities and destinations. The Park Service will continue to provide information about the national seashore by telephone and mail. Additional programs will be cooperatively developed through various online computer network systems. These programs may be flexible and respond more in depth to individual needs, including fairly detailed information about where to go and what to do. The national seashore's home page on the Internet will be frequently updated with information about access to the Cape, as well as recreational opportunities on the Outer Cape. The national seashore will work with others to minimize the duplication of information and to incorporate the information needs of others, as appropriate.
- *Arrival and local travel information* — A partnership and presence will be established at the Provincetown and Hyannis airports and ferry operations in Provincetown and elsewhere on the Cape. The national seashore will also provide up-to-date information at town and state information centers and major transportation hubs throughout the Cape. Visitor information will be publicized through displays, bulletin cases, individualized computers, brochures, and other means. Information will focus on helping people get to their destinations easily and pleasantly and to realize their vacation plans, such as where to find a particular trail or historic house, or how to find a town center or a national seashore beach facility; referrals to chambers of commerce will be made for information on commercial campgrounds, bicycle rentals, and places to stay or eat. At information areas, the seashore will take the opportunity to convey key environmental messages, such as the benefits of taking shuttles, how climbing on dunes damages plants, or how washing or bathing in ponds with soap degrades water quality.
- *Partnership and stewardship opportunities* — Partnership opportunities will be extended to area businesses that serve the public. For example, in cooperation with local radio and cable television stations, the Park Service may provide technical consultation on informational and educational programs for Cape residents and guests at area motels. Coordinated training programs for the many providers will focus on improving the quality, consistency, and accuracy of information and orientation on Cape Cod. Public outreach will also identify volunteer opportunities for Cape residents and the general public to address national seashore stewardship needs, as appropriate.
- *National seashore visitor centers* — The Salt Pond visitor center will continue to serve as the primary information/orientation facility for the national seashore, and it will be improved for visitor use. It will also provide information on other related public educational programs and Outer Cape features open to the public. The Province Lands visitor center will provide a similar information/orientation function near Provincetown. Both centers will provide trip-planning options to offer a variety of resource-based experiences and to distribute use so as to reduce traffic, crowds, and frustration.
- *Highway and local information signs* — The Park Service will work with the Massachusetts Highway Department and others to improve informational signs along U.S. 6. These signs will help visitors find key destinations and distribute visitors more effectively to parking areas, beach access points, trails, and other use areas. The national seashore will improve its sign system by

adding signs that help people find NPS sites and tell them when they are entering or leaving the national seashore. Signs will be designed to blend with the character of the area.

ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

CONTEXT: Traffic congestion on Cape Cod has increased to the point of gridlock at some intersections along U.S. 6 during the peak summer season. The national seashore is part of a complex natural and social environment that brings people to the Outer Cape year after year. However, based on a 1993 summer survey, it is not the primary destination for most visitors.

Traffic is a regional problem that must be addressed collectively. The Cape Cod Commission's 1995 *Long Range Transportation Plan* recommends actions to prevent widespread gridlock in the near future. Proposals range from improving public transit to developing bicycle and pedestrian paths.

The Park Service can help reduce traffic congestion, facilitate circulation, enhance safety, and improve air quality through regional cooperative efforts to solve problems and promote alternative transportation modes, including innovative solutions within the national seashore. This is consistent with federal transportation initiatives stimulated by the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

The national seashore is an active partner in Cape Cod Pathways, a county program that seeks to improve walking opportunities on the Cape. Long-distance hiking opportunities within the national seashore are limited. Except for some short bicycle trail segments and the Cape Cod Rail Trail through Eastham and South Wellfleet, bicycling from Wellfleet to Provincetown is primarily along roadways, which causes congestion and safety concerns.

During summer parking capacities at some beaches, visitor centers, trails, and scenic viewing areas are frequently met or exceeded, causing cars to be turned away to less crowded locations. Proposals to add parking have caused local concern about impacts and congestion.

The Provincetown airport is on federal lands within the national seashore and operates under a special use permit. In conformance with the deed of conveyance of the Province Lands, the Park Service leases land for airport purposes. The airport is an important transportation facility for the Outer Cape and is part of the national aviation system. The airport commission is engaged in a long-term master planning and environmental analysis program, with participation by the Park Service and other agencies. The Park Service is vitally interested in how airport public safety upgrades could potentially affect national seashore resources and values.

Goal: Adopt the intermodal transportation goals of the Cape Cod Commission's and provide support for them.

Strategies: *Cooperation with local communities* □ The National Park Service will cooperate in planning with local communities to provide or improve various modes of access. Even though the peak period of concern for the national seashore is the summer months, public transportation solutions that improve both seasonal and year-round options will be encouraged. National seashore managers will support local initiatives to improve transportation. For example,

- Encourage nonmotorized transportation by joining and expanding existing bike and pedestrian trail segments so that they link major destinations throughout the Cape.
 - (1) The Cape Cod Rail Trail should be extended from South Wellfleet to Provincetown. The national seashore will work in collaboration with the state and the towns of Wellfleet, Truro, and Provincetown to help identify favorable routes.
 - (2) Safe pedestrian/bike routes, including the construction of bicycle paths or designating bicycle routes, will be identified with surrounding communities. Bicycle routes may need to be provided along existing roadways due to environmental, political, and fiscal constraints associated with building new bicycle paths outside road corridors. Routes may be provided by widening road shoulders to accommodate bicycles; where feasible, designating one lane for vehicles and one lane for two-way bicycle traffic may also be explored. Solutions should mitigate Outer Cape traffic problems and improve public safety. Other opportunities may be provided by using and interconnecting existing sand roads and trails.
 - (3) Foot trails can be provided along the length of Cape Cod in cooperation with Cape Cod Pathways. Trail linkages on the Outer Cape within the national seashore will be planned in conjunction with communities; connecting town centers and residential/lodging clusters to seashore attractions will be considered. Trailheads will be established at selected locations for longer trails.
- Expand shuttles and related services to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation from town centers and other transportation facilities on the Cape, such as bus and ferry terminals and airports, in cooperation with towns and transportation planners and providers.
- Help provide appropriately located support facilities such as secure bicycle storage, park-and-ride lots, restroom facilities, and racks for beach equipment and bicycles on shuttle buses.
- Explore parking supply solutions that will mutually benefit the towns and the national seashore.
- Encourage the adoption of financial incentives, such as free or reduced prices for beach access for bicyclists and walkers, so people will use alternative transportation modes.
- Encourage or help plan safety and traffic improvements to U.S. 6, such as slower speeds, carefully located pedestrian and bicycle crossings, and turning lanes.
- Explore interconnected shuttle loops in Provincetown/North Truro, South Truro/Wellfleet, and Eastham in cooperation with the towns, with stops at town centers, national seashore destinations, and shuttle collector lots off U.S. 6.
- Encourage municipalities to support on-demand jitney service from shuttle collector lots off U.S. 6, and work with them to engage and permit appropriate commercial businesses to provide this service.
- Encourage regional and local transportation planners and providers to increase ferry service to bayside locations, possibly including a link to the Plymouth area.

□ **GOAL: Provide access to public use areas that is environmentally sensitive, safe, and consistent with the desired experience and the intermodal planning initiatives; ensure that the transportation system does not detract from the Cape Cod character.**

STRATEGIES: *A trail plan* — A comprehensive trail plan will be developed to consider locations and specifications for more walking opportunities of all kinds. This plan, which will be undertaken in cooperation with Cape Cod Pathways, will provide more options for recreation, nature appreciation, and alternative transportation, including connecting some trails to town destinations and residential

areas. Sand roads will continue to be available for hiking, dog walking, and bicycling. Some existing undesignated trails and new trail connections will be identified, and some unplanned trails resulting from persistent use (referred to as social trails) will be closed off and revegetated where resource damage was occurring.

Preferred routes for mountain bicycles will be identified to direct this use to areas where it can be accommodated without use conflicts or resource degradation. Bicycle routes may include fire/sand roads that are made more accessible and signed, and support facilities (such as vehicle and bicycle parking) may be provided.

Road, trail, intersection, and parking standards — In cooperation with local towns and the state, standards and designs will be developed for roads, trails, intersections, and parking areas, along with potential facilities. The purpose of these standards will be to improve access while helping perpetuate Cape Cod's scenic rural character and environment.

Alternative energy vehicles □ The Park Service will invest in public transit vehicles using alternative power sources, such as electricity, propane, and natural gas. The national seashore's fleet vehicles will be converted to alternative fuels as feasible, in accordance with federal initiatives. The Park Service will also encourage the use of alternative energy vehicles by local towns and other private transportation providers.

Shuttle service to beaches □ Shuttle service will be continued to Coast Guard Beach, and establishing or permitting NPS, municipal, or commercial shuttle services to other selected sites will be considered. The national seashore will work with the towns to consider providing parking and staging at Nauset Regional High School or Truro Central School in the summer when schools are not in session, and making shuttle connections to some town centers.

Congestion and parking □ Solutions to congestion and parking will be studied on a case-by-case basis. Generally, parking lots will not be sized to accommodate peak use due to the environmental and fiscal impacts of providing additional parking spaces that will go unused for many months of the year.

Beach parking □ The Park Service will reduce the impact of beach parking at locations where there are natural resource concerns, such as coastal hazard areas and wetlands. As parking facilities in the coastal hazard area erode, portions may be removed to avoid pavement and other materials from being swept to sea. In some areas they will be replaced or relocated nearby, or they may not be replaced with facilities of equivalent size, given that shuttle and bicycle access improvements may help reduce automobile use. (Also see the discussion of coastal processes beginning on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.)

Provincetown airport □ Cape Cod National Seashore will continue to work with the Provincetown Airport Commission and other interested agencies, including the Federal Aviation Administration, the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission, and the Cape Cod Commission, to determine ways to ensure that airport operations and redevelopment are compatible with national seashore resources and values. The seashore resources and values that will be considered include opportunities for quiet contemplation, reasonable access to NPS facilities, and the preservation of vegetation, wildlife, wetlands, dunes, views, and cultural resources. Community transportation alternatives will also be considered. New impacts on natural, recreational, and scenic values will have to be minimized or found to be not detrimental. The National Park Service must also ensure compliance with section 4f of the Department of Transportation Act, which requires a determination that there is "no prudent or feasible alternative" to the use of lands in a park, and that "the proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use." Airport initiatives will also be considered in light of federal, state, and regional intermodal transportation planning objectives. (Also, see the "Authorization of Conveyance of Commonwealth Lands" in appendix A and the discussion of the Hatches Harbor restoration project in the "Water Resources" section; the latter project is subject to a memorandum of understanding with the town of Provincetown.)

INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

CONTEXT: Cape Cod National Seashore offers many opportunities for visitors and residents of all ages to understand and appreciate the value and significance of the Cape's resources and character. Interpretive facilities include two visitor centers, eight self-guided interpretive trails, and four historic properties with public access. Information is provided through four audiovisual programs, several museum exhibits, three bookstores, and more than 30 wayside exhibits.

The personal services interpretive program offers a wide variety of guided walks and hikes, tours of historic properties, evening illustrated talks, sunset beach campfires, and special events. Outreach programs are given for local schools, groups, and civic organizations. In addition, environmental education programs based at two national seashore facilities have reached thousands of area students during the past three decades. Volunteers and representatives of several partner organizations and agencies conduct or help provide many of these activities and programs.

Many aspects of the Cape's character are represented outside the national seashore boundaries. The National Park Service cooperates with other organizations and agencies to provide interpretive and educational programs, but there is potential to strengthen current partnership agreements and create new ones.

Within the national seashore there is an opportunity to more fully interpret critical resource issues (such as the preservation of kettle ponds and the protection of plover habitat) so the public understands the challenges. There are also opportunities to enhance the interpretation of historic structures and to expand interpretive programs in the Orleans/Chatham area.

Visitation at the Salt Pond visitor center has increased dramatically, and additional staff space and bus-loading areas are needed. Facility improvements would also better meet the needs of visitors and staff. Audiovisual facilities at the amphitheaters at the Salt Pond and Province Lands visitor centers are outdated. Alternatives need to be studied for the Coast Guard Beach environmental education facilities, which may soon be lost to coastal erosion.

□ GOAL: Provide a wide variety of interpretive and educational opportunities for a diverse public to help them understand and appreciate how Cape Cod's natural and cultural resources are interrelated with its history and the people who live there.

STRATEGIES: *Interpretive and educational programs regarding Cape Cod cultural heritage* — Existing interpretive and educational programs at the national seashore, including partnership arrangements, will continue. However, the interpretive focus will be significantly broadened to link the national seashore with the relatively diverse region and to present a more integrated picture of the Cape Cod character. This will include interpreting the significance of Native Americans and a broad variety of other ethnic and cultural groups that have both historical and contemporary associations with the Outer Cape and that have contributed to its character and history. More opportunities will be

explored to cooperate with communities, agencies, institutions, and cultural groups to jointly develop interpretive and educational programs. An interpretive plan for the national seashore will specify the types of exhibits and other media for these programs.

Broadened interpretive programs and collaborative efforts — Programming will be broadened to include more topics related to the six major interpretive themes for the seashore (see pages 68–69). NPS interpretation will continue, and educational opportunities of various types will be offered year-round.

Environmental education and outreach to schools — Better connections will be made with other environmental education programs on the Cape. This may include programs for schoolchildren and continuing education, as well as programs that attract ecotourism groups.

Expertise required — An educational program coordinator will be needed to serve as a liaison with schools, to help develop curriculum, and to conduct workshops. In addition, not all program expansion can be handled by volunteers; some additional specialists on staff will likely be needed. Efforts will be made to include local experts.

Relocation of the Coast Guard Beach educational program — The National Park Service must study alternative sites for eventually relocating the educational program at Coast Guard Beach. Coastal erosion will soon eliminate access, and subsequently the facility itself will be lost. The alternative location with the best potential for the existing elementary school program is the current Nauset Knoll Motor Lodge (see the “Concessions and Commercial Services” section, page 77). The Nauset Knoll complex may be redesigned to accommodate one large group or several smaller groups. The beach, dunes, and marsh are essential learning areas nearby and are readily available for environmental education programs for elementary or secondary schools.

Morris Island / Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge — In cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service will establish an interpretive presence, such as a kiosk and brochures, at the existing Morris Island / Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge facility. Such a program will expand the availability of information about the national seashore in the southern part of the seashore and the Outer Cape.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary — In cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Park Service will provide interpretive information related to the offshore sanctuary at the Province Lands visitor center. Information will be geared to common themes shared by the national seashore and the sanctuary. Media may include exhibits on the second floor, which offers spectacular views out to the sanctuary, and wayside exhibits in the parking lot. Collaboration on an interpretive training and evaluation process for whale watch guides is expected to be the primary assistance sought by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Historic structures — Year-round interpretive programs will be provided at key historic structures, such as the Atwood-Higgins and Penniman houses, the Old Harbor Life-saving Station, Highland Light, and the Nauset and Three Sisters Lights. Interpretive programs and media for these structures will focus on their historical significance and relate directly to primary interpretive themes. In considering adaptive uses for other historic structures (through leases or cooperative agreements), the Park Service will give highest priority to interpretive potential and the need to allow public access.

Pamet cranberry bog house — The restored bog house at Pamet cranberry bog will be interpreted in context with the associated cultural landscape. Interpretive programs and media developed for this site will also focus on the historical significance and relate directly to the primary interpretive themes.

Salt Pond and Province Lands visitor centers — The Salt Pond and Province Lands visitor centers will be redesigned to better accommodate visitor flow, provide more efficient work areas for employees, and reflect sustainable design principles. Facilities for buses, bus loading and unloading, restrooms, and audiovisual program options will also be improved. The amphitheaters at Salt Pond and Province Lands will be redesigned to better present a variety of outdoor presentations and special activities.

□ **GOAL: Promote public awareness of resource management issues in cooperation with local towns, the Cape Cod Commission, and other partners.**

STRATEGIES: *Public awareness of resource-related issues* — To create public awareness of resource issues, the national seashore will continue to develop and expand a wide variety of resource-focused programs. The public's role and active participation in resource stewardship will be encouraged. Examples include developing a working groundwater model or exhibits on current wetland restoration projects; demonstrating how archeological excavations are conducted; creating programs on coastal processes and sea level rise, historic restoration, local culture, and cultural landscapes; and expanding school programs. These efforts will dovetail with efforts to disseminate resource information through interpretive and educational programs.

Cooperative interpretation of sensitive resource issues — Partnership opportunities will be developed throughout Cape Cod to explore methods and locations for interpreting sensitive resource issues and promoting stewardship to protect valuable resources and resource systems.

Dissemination of information about resources and environmentally sound practices — Methods to disseminate resource information in a timely manner will include collaboratively developing programs with regional research institutions and museums. The intent will be to educate all segments of the public on how to protect and preserve historic buildings, cultural heritage, cultural landscapes, archeological resources, water, vegetation, wildlife, coastal processes, and air resources. Collaborative efforts with local museums and institutions will also be encouraged to develop programs and media on topics related to regional themes.

The National Park Service will also promote and showcase day-to-day examples of responsible environmental practices to increase public knowledge of alternative, more sustainable approaches and systems. Examples include recycling options, use of environmentally sound building materials, energy-saving methods, water-conserving devices, and low-impact septic system technologies. (Also see "Private Residential Properties," page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, and "Utilities," page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**)

Reporting on new research projects — A reporting mechanism will be developed as new research projects are initiated to distribute information on project design, as well as research results. Videos, sound clips, and written text on various topics such as NPS management philosophies, resource values, and the rationale for management actions may be regularly presented.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES FOR CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE

The interpretive focus for Cape Cod National Seashore will be broadened to link the national seashore with the region and to present a more holistic picture of the Cape Cod character. The themes cover those ideas that are critical to understanding the national seashore's significance. All interpretive programs (both media and personal services) will relate to one or more of the themes, and each theme will be addressed by some part of the overall interpretive program.

□ ***Cape Cod's natural systems and processes have produced distinctive landforms and habitats.***

Cape Cod's soil and rocks were initially deposited by continental glaciation. The Cape is a vast accumulation of glacial drift. Except for dunes and windblown sediments, its landforms □ kettle ponds, erratics, kames, and pumets □ all derive from glaciation.

Cape Cod's biota, climate, and geomorphology express its seasonal diversity. The violent action of winter storms on Cape Cod's easily eroded sand changes landforms with the seasons.

Migration is part of the annual cycle of many animal species, from waterfowl and other birds to whales and seals.

Salt marshes occur in the protected bays and inlets behind the barrier beaches and islands and constitute one of the Cape's most characteristic and important ecosystems.

The range of temperature in surrounding waters, combined with numerous estuaries of varying salinity, has produced some of the richest marine habitat on the East Coast.

Of all the creatures nourished by the sea, none has been more important to the history of Cape Cod than the Atlantic cod.

□ ***The elements of natural change, primarily through the effects of the sea on the land, embrace and permeate all of the Cape's resources.***

The configuration of Cape Cod is the result of the actions of rising sea level, winds, waves, and ocean currents. Rising sea level is eroding Cape Cod. Ocean waves and beach processes are eroding the Great Beach and building land at both ends.

Rising sea level established Cape Cod's most important ecosystems □ bays, tidal flats, and protective barrier beaches □ which provide habitat for a greater abundance and variety of aquatic life.

As the sea erodes the Great Beach escarpment, it exposes evidence for thousands of years of geological and human history.

□ ***The people of Cape Cod have intensively affected the land, and they continue to interact with the land and surrounding waters. Cape Cod is the continuing saga of human events etched onto the landscape.***

Nomadic Paleo-Indian people □ hunters and gatherers □ arrived on Cape Cod about 12,000 years ago. Succeeding populations developed a more sedentary, agricultural way of life, notable for a more permanent occupation and a sophisticated social structure and economy.

By 1600 the Wampanoag Indians had established six villages along the creeks and bays from Chatham to Wellfleet, relying on a combination of

hunting, fishing, and farming for sustenance.

In 1620 Cape Cod was 97% forested. English settlers began wood cutting and stock grazing. By 1750 the Outer Cape was virtually stripped of its extensive forests. Sheep grazing and cranberry cultivation continued to affect the forests.

In 1654 the Province Lands were set aside by the Plymouth Colony as public lands, never to be privately owned or developed, making these the earliest lands ever set aside as a public trust in the United States.

Henry David Thoreau visited Cape Cod in 1849 and 1850 to partake of the isolation, solitude, and vastness. He wrote of his journey, the people he encountered, and the desolation resulting from overfarming and overgrazing.

The cranberry has been commercially raised on the Cape's bogs since the early 1800s. The cranberry, as much as the cod, has become a symbol of Cape Cod.

The coming of the railroad, which initially contributed to the decline of the packet boat and merchant marine, helped revive the Cape's economy by linking Cape Cod towns to the rest of

New England □ especially the region's urban populations.

□ ***The waters around Cape Cod have profoundly affected and continue to affect human activities here.***

While taking advantage of many of the marine resources around them, the first English settlers on Cape Cod were farmers, not fishermen. They did not truly become seafarers until forced to by the land's limitations and by their own unintentional mismanagement of it.

Cape Cod occupied a significant place throughout the period of European/American Indian contact. It was charted, documented, or explored by Verrazano, Gosnold, Champlain, Smith, and others. On November 9, 1620, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims sighted the Cape, the first land they had seen in the two months since leaving England. While anchored off what became known as Provincetown, they explored areas of the Cape, encountered the Native Americans living there, and signed the Mayflower Compact.

After the American Revolution, the manufacture of salt from seawater helped support

Cape Cod's fishing industry and provided a cash crop. Before railroads were built, travel by sea provided faster and cheaper transportation than by land. Ships were the primary means of transportation on Cape Cod before the Civil War.

Provincetown, with its unrivaled harbor for fishing and whaling, became the Cape's most important port. Invigorated by the arrival of the railroad and the influx of Portuguese fishermen, Provincetown remained an important port until the end of the 19th century.

From packet boats to clipper ships, Cape Codders attained seafaring eminence as shipmasters in the merchant marine and brought home cosmopolitan perspectives unusual among mid-19th century New England towns.

The Outer Cape is a graveyard for about 3,000 ships wrecked within the past 300 years. To aid navigation, prevent shipwrecks, and assist the survivors of shipwrecks, the federal government provided lighthouses, lifesaving stations, and Coast Guard stations.

From the invention of Marconi's wireless telegraph until the introduction of satellites, Cape

Cod was an ideal location for ship-to-shore and transatlantic communications systems.

In the 20th century the popularity of ocean recreation has made Cape Cod one of the nation's leading summer playgrounds. Outer Cape residents' activities and livelihoods are integrally bound with the waters.

□ ***As both a haven and a subject, Cape Cod has drawn artists and authors for more than a century. In addition, its environment has encouraged the development of structures and tools that have come to be appreciated for their beauty as well as their utility.***

Artists and writers made their homes on Cape Cod, painting and writing of seascapes and landscapes. Few, if any, rural areas of comparable size have inspired such a rich and varied creative response.

Cape Cod houses, which illustrate how settlers adapted to nature, rather than confronting it, are of national architectural significance. Windmills and lighthouses are other characteristic architectural features that capture the imagination of visitors.

Cape Cod is the home of utilitarian art objects, such

as the Cape Cod catboat, the quahog bullrake, and the first commercial cranberry scoops and crates. Cape Cod is also a place to find lobster traps, quarterboards, and carved waterfowling decoys.

Henry Beston lived for a full year on the Great Beach and wrote *The Outermost House*, a personal and a natural history of Cape Cod. Thoreau preceded him, and other nature essayists (Hay, Finch) have followed, as have many other writers.

As a result of World War I, writers and artists, who had previously traveled to Europe, discovered the charm of fishing villages and the extraordinary light on the Cape. This tradition has enriched cultural life on the Cape and is fostered today by local organizations and individuals.

□ ***Cape Cod National Seashore is a place where people enjoy a variety of recreational, educational, and inspirational activities in various settings. It is a place for people to enjoy spectacular natural settings and to experience a sense of continuity linking past, present, and future.***

Cape Cod offers unpolluted waters and beaches, the harvest of

the sea, vistas, reminders of our maritime past, and the opportunity for discovery and self-discovery.

Cape Cod National Seashore is a place for spiritual replenishment, where nature and cultural heritage are highly valued and protected.

The national seashore offers a living demonstration of how current and future generations may interact responsibly with the environment, both on Cape Cod and elsewhere.

he national seashore provides many opportunities to relate the challenges of resource stewardship. There is a need to convey complex, often controversial, resource management issues to the public to broaden their understanding of the myriad factors affecting decisions.

ACTIVITIES, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

CONTEXT: Cape Cod National Seashore and adjacent towns provide a wide variety of opportunities for visitors to enjoy athletic, sporting, touring, and educational activities of all types. The national seashore has two visitor centers, two environmental education centers, trails and picnic areas, several historic buildings, and numerous beach facilities that are available to the public.

All public activities within the national seashore are managed in a way that will provide enjoyment and minimize user conflicts, as well as protect resources and promote public safety. Rangers enforce regulations and laws governing all uses and activities within the seashore.

Resource protection priorities and public use pressures are sometimes in conflict, affecting access to and use of seashore resources. Areas where conflicts occasionally occur include wetlands, archeological sites, barrier beaches and dunes, tidal marshes and flats, and freshwater ponds. Some activities, such as offroad vehicle use, and hunting have been closely regulated, and clothing-optional sunbathing has been completely prohibited. Some local regulations differ from NPS regulations, such as restrictions on personal watercraft use. Use regulations are not changed by a general management plan, but through a rule-making process.

Approximately 600 private residential properties covering more than 1,600 acres are included within the national seashore. With few exceptions, these private lands are not available for public use, and visitors sometimes trespass inadvertently onto these lands. The Park Service is required by legislation to preserve privacy and property values for these owners, while allowing public access to publicly owned lands, consistent with resource preservation.

Demand is increasing for additional opportunities at ocean beaches, kettle ponds, historic sites, and other attractions. While some recreational demand is simply due to growth in local communities and the region, as well as increasing public visitation, there is also a strong demand for additional educational experiences.

Ways to deal with existing use impacts and to take advantage of future public opportunities at Fort Hill, Pamet cranberry bog, the former North Truro air force station, and Herring Cove Beach need to be analyzed.

□ **GOAL: Consider and allow public activities at Cape Cod National Seashore that are compatible with the seashore's purpose and that have minimum impacts on resources and other uses.**

STRATEGIES: *Public activities* — As the need arose, public activities at Cape Cod National Seashore will be evaluated in consultation with affected stakeholders to see if they meet the following criteria:

- The use will be compatible with the purposes and management objectives of the national seashore.
- User conflicts will be minimized.
- This use will not result in resource degradation beyond what is reasonable in the relevant management zone.
- The use will not impair the quality of the desired experience defined for the relevant management zone.
- The scale of use will be in character with Cape Cod.
- The use will not constitute a public health or safety hazard.

Some uses may be restricted to certain areas or to certain times, with the regulation and level of use varying from season to season or from place to place. For example, areas have been designated for ORV driving, and hunting is allowed only during certain seasons. Most existing recreational use will continue. Changes in the management of specific uses and activities may result from focused discussions or planning efforts in consultation with the towns and the public; in such cases a range of issues and solutions will be jointly evaluated. When there are public use conflicts or disagreements, discussions will be held with concerned parties, and mediation or other alternative dispute resolution methods may be employed to resolve conflicts among the parties.

Long-term ORV management changes are anticipated from the completion of the negotiated rule-making process started in 1995. Some of these changes may include additional miles of ORV corridor and new access points. The draft regulation, which was addressed in a separate environmental assessment (NPS 1997), was designed to provide flexibility without additional threats to resources.

Fishing and surf-fishing access — The national seashore will work with the state and others to ensure that healthy native fish populations are available in freshwater and saltwater areas. Fishing will continue to be regulated by the state and, where authorized, by the National Park Service. Fishing in the Province Lands area is specifically addressed in the deed of conveyance of commonwealth lands. Surf-fishing access will continue throughout the national seashore; vehicular or walk-in surf-fishing access opportunities will continue to be provided at existing beaches and access points, and along approved ORV corridors.

Recreation emphasis — To minimize conflicts, passive and nonmotorized forms of recreation will be emphasized in NPS brochures. Offroad motorized vehicles that cannot be licensed for use on public streets, such as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and dirt bikes, will continue to be prohibited.

Public use management strategies — The National Park Service will continue to develop public use management strategies to minimize resource impacts and use conflicts, especially based on management zoning (see page **Error! Reference source not found.**) and information gathered through long-term monitoring. In consultation with local communities, this may include

- (1) defining a trail through an area with many unofficial social trails that serve as substitute pathways to get to a scenic viewpoint or destination, such as coastal beaches like the Herring Cove backdunes; some other social trails will then be eliminated and revegetated to correct significant resource damage problems or use conflicts
- (2) providing a cliff overlook at a location that is attractive for viewing but not dangerous, such as the Highland Light area, and closing off access and social trails to more unsafe locations along the coastal bank

People will be dispersed from congested areas that are being overused and that are not functioning as desired for a specific management zone. High-use areas will be concentrated in the developed management zone, and sites will be improved to accommodate larger groups of people.

Beach management strategies — Beach access, parking, and capacity for national seashore beaches will be managed by employing traffic management and travel information techniques, including the following:

- Use a system to communicate when parking lots are full (such as remotely operated electric light boards at key locations), coordinating public service announcements with radio stations, using low-watt radio advisory systems, or informing people at state and town visitor centers.
- Provide information at hotels, tourist information centers, in newspapers, and on local radio stations.
- Provide or encourage the adoption of incentives for nonmotorized beach access and the use of public transportation.
- Encourage the development of more beach shuttle operations where appropriate, in conjunction with local towns, schools, and businesses.

☐ **GOAL: Create opportunities for more diverse activities at various locations, and facilities to support them.**

STRATEGIES: *Visitor activities* — People will be made aware of the level of ability required, the amount of exertion necessary, and the time commitment required for each activity.

Opportunities for visitors with disabilities — Wherever possible, the National Park Service will make a wide range of experiences available to visitors with disabilities, in conformance with accessibility standards.

Maintenance of nature trails — The national seashore's nature trails will continue to be provided and maintained to provide leisurely walking, birdwatching, and other contemplative opportunities. Erosion will be controlled and boardwalks replaced as necessary. Additional short nature trails may be established as site planning is completed.

Visitor opportunities at distinctive sites within the national seashore — Visitor facilities and access will be provided in the following areas, which represent special places within the national seashore:

- Natural and cultural areas: The Park Service will explore trailhead/ parking areas for the Hollows area, Bound Brook, and the Atwood-Higgins complex.
- Heathlands: An interpretive loop trail will be created through a heathland community, possibly in the High Head area, which could extend to a viewing area near the cliff.
- Dunes: More formalized pedestrian access to the dunes will be provided on a limited basis. For example, a boardwalk (designed to protect resources) could be provided at the Province Lands visitor center, the Herring Cove Beach area, or both areas.
- Bayside beaches: Providing walk-in access to an NPS public bayside beach in Wellfleet, with offsite parking, will be explored.
- A kettle pond: The Park Service will consider developing a pulloff/ viewing area at a kettle pond near U.S. 6, perhaps at Snow Pond in Truro along an existing state right-of-way to give the public an opportunity to view a kettle pond. Access will be carefully controlled to ensure the protection of natural resources and to provide a quality visitor experience.

Viewpoints and picnic areas — Small, unpaved parking areas or pull-offs will be provided at appropriate locations along popular scenic routes to reduce parking at undesigned locations

along roadsides. Parking will primarily be located in previously disturbed areas. People will be able to take trails to scenic viewpoints or picnic areas, or short interpretive trails.

Group picnicking — A group picnic area or areas will be developed at Pilgrim Heights and/or in the Marconi area to provide locations for events and gatherings. An alternative will be to arrange for the occasional use of existing town scout camps.

Primitive camping — Appropriate areas for limited walk-in camping will be designated; this activity will be allowed by permit only. Conditions on sanitary issues and campfires will be specified. Locations that may be considered include High Head, Great Island, or the Marconi area.

Group camping — A group camping area will be provided for structured volunteer work groups or environmental education groups participating in seashore-related programs. A site may be provided in a previously disturbed area at the Marconi station area or the former North Truro air force station. Referrals to scout group camping sites in local communities may also be made.

Fort Hill, Pamet cranberry bog, the former North Truro air force station, and Herring Cove Beach — The Park Service is currently considering improvements for public use at Fort Hill, the Pamet cranberry bog, the former North Truro air force station, and Herring Cove Beach. Site plans (and if necessary, environmental assessments, which will be prepared at a later date with public involvement and consultation with the affected local communities), will present detailed proposals. Actions being considered are described briefly below.

- **Fort Hill:** Encompassing 100 acres of grasslands and forest bordering Nauset Marsh in Eastham, Fort Hill is one of the premier historic and scenic resources within the national seashore, and one of the most popular nonbeach destinations. The site also contains the historic Penniman house, historic stone walls, Skiff Hill, and the Fort Hill scenic overlook. The management concept for the site is (1) to preserve and maintain the historic features and qualities of the culturally significant structures, landscape, and archeological resources, while protecting natural resources; and (2) to encourage pedestrian use of the site to support contemplative activities, public education, and the serenity of the environment. Improvements being considered include improving wayfinding and interpretive information, reconfiguring parking, using shuttles from the visitor center for events and tours, improving Penniman house maintenance and accessibility, restoring additional cultural landscape features, and focusing trail use at the Hemenway Landing area in cooperation with the town of Eastham.
- **Pamet Cranberry Bog:** Nestled in a lowland swamp surrounded by wooded hillsides and Ballston Beach, this 27-acre site has a rich history from the earliest days of cranberry cultivation. The site contains vestiges of three cranberry bogs and a dilapidated building that once housed workers during the harvest season. Proposals to restore the area as a working cranberry bog have not yet been feasible. The management concept for the Pamet cranberry bog is to preserve highly valued and interesting cultural and natural features of the Pamet Valley area, and to manage public use so as not to overwhelm the specialness of the area. Improvements being considered include preserving the landscape to include possible continuation of the demonstration cranberry bog for interpretive purposes, plus stabilizing and preserving the bog house. Parking, disabled access, trail improvements, interpretive program enhancements, and an upgraded viewing platform on an adjacent hilltop are also being considered.
- **Former North Truro Air Force Station:** This former radar tracking facility has recently been incorporated into the national seashore. The site includes over 100 acres of wooded open space, two water wells used for the base itself and municipal purposes, and over 70 former military structures. The remaining structures require considerable ongoing maintenance. Productive reuse of this former military site will be planned in concert with the town of Truro and a broad spectrum of interested local and regional organizations. A range of possible uses that are consistent with the purposes of the national seashore are being

considered in a site plan and environmental assessment. These include the demolition of the majority of facilities and site restoration and approximate levels of building reuse. The completion of the site plan is expected to stimulate the first phases of project implementation.

The emerging management concept is to establish a Highlands center for the arts and environment — a community for the development of the arts, sciences, and environmental understanding. Activities at the center will foster creative investigations of the interdependence of human and natural systems and the linking of arts and sciences. The center will be inspired by and in harmony with the surrounding community, native history and culture, and the landscape setting of the North Truro Highlands.

The center will house a collaborative of organizations, forming a unique community where creative people could work, communicate, and learn. It will also be a place to demonstrate the use of sustainable technologies, as well as the location of the town's experimental native plant nursery and the NPS North Atlantic Coastal Laboratory. The center will be patterned after similar public/private program initiatives in other national park system units.

Demolishing or rehabilitating structures, reusing them on an interim basis for operational or special programs, and long-term redevelopment of the core portion of the former air force station are being planned. The buildings may be retrofitted or converted to dormitories, offices, and meeting spaces for use by nonprofit organizations and the National Park Service or for higher education or continuing education programs for which there is a demand both locally and regionally.

It is anticipated that a management oversight group will assist the Park Service in stimulating interest in the center, obtaining funding, and soliciting and coordinating appropriate partners to lease and improve facilities and to provide public programs. Partners will be organizations that can provide financially self-sustaining programs and that will make use of innovative and collaborative abilities. NPS parameters and criteria will be developed in the forthcoming site plan. The facility will be open to the general public and will contribute to the year-round community and economy.

- **Herring Cove Beach:** This popular beach area west of downtown Provincetown is the site of both heavy public use and sensitive resources. The area includes miles of sandy beach, bay vistas, barrier dunes, upland dunes, tidal flats, and marshlands. National seashore managers will initiate a planning process, in consultation with the local community and other interested parties, to consider proposed improvements. Improvements being considered include building updated restroom and changing facilities when the existing facility becomes outdated, developing an inland boardwalk trail to interconnect beach access points, providing a pedestrian path from Provincetown, maintaining the visual access to the water, and providing educational opportunities. Shuttle, bicycle, pedestrian, and disabled access will be improved.

Continued routine maintenance will maintain the present parking lots as long as the coastline remains stable. If major portions of facilities are undermined or destroyed by coastal erosion, the relocation of facilities behind the primary dune will be considered in consultation with the community.

□ **GOAL: Plan for public recreational opportunities and services throughout the region in cooperation with other public and private providers.**

STRATEGIES: *Outer Cape recreation facilities, needs, and coordinated planning* — Recreation providers on the Outer Cape, including the National Park Service, will be encouraged to cooperatively inventory existing facilities, forecast future needs, and coordinate planning efforts. *Coordinated management of public use facilities* — The Park Service will coordinate the management of its public use facilities with those of towns and other public and private providers. The

intent will be to strive for consistency in operations, making it easier for people to get information on various visitor services, regardless of the provider. This will include identifying common and different policies and services to the public (such as hours of operation, any fees, and regulations).

Consolidated Truro beach facilities — In collaboration with the town of Truro, the Park Service will consider consolidating beach facilities and parking at Head of the Meadow to achieve operational efficiencies. This may include coordinating bathhouse and parking facilities, fee collection, lifeguards, and maintenance. At a minimum, the northern portion of the NPS parking lot will be moved farther from the wetland.

Bayside beach access — The possibility of establishing bayside beach access in the Great Island / Duck Harbor vicinity for nonresident seashore visitors will be discussed with the town of Wellfleet.

Access to town beaches threatened by erosion — The Park Service will work with local towns, as needed, to maintain access to town beach facilities that are threatened by erosion. Assistance may be provided, such as engaging in mutually beneficial land exchanges or other planning projects. NPS objectives for resource protection, public safety, access for emergency vehicles, and promotion of bicycling and transit options will be emphasized.

☐ **GOAL: Provide facilities and services that do not adversely impact natural and cultural resources and that are in harmony with the character of Cape Cod.**

STRATEGIES: *Facilities for average peak crowds* — The Park Service will build visitor support facilities such as parking lots and bathhouses to serve average summer levels rather than crowds. Exceptions will include water/ wastewater systems and other systems that will need to accommodate the highest visitation levels to meet public health and safety requirements.

Upgrade existing public use facilities — Existing facilities will be upgraded to ensure that they were environmentally sound and safe for public use. In the short term, sanitary facilities at several beaches will be provided or replaced. Other facility improvements will be identified and evaluated for future action, as necessary.

Facilities destroyed by natural acts — The Park Service will reexamine the appropriateness of any facilities destroyed by acts of nature before rebuilding or authorizing rebuilding (also see the discussion on coastal processes beginning on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

☐ **GOAL: Minimize use conflicts between public use areas and residential areas within the national seashore.**

Directional signs — To ensure that visitors respect private property and do not get lost, parking will be designated, and effective but unobtrusive directional signs will be provided.

Visitor routes — Where feasible, the Park Service will plan visitor routes to avoid residential areas. To minimize impacts on residents when trails or other uses are planned near improved properties or other private property, the following procedures will be adopted:

- Ask private property owners to participate in planning efforts for activities or routes occurring near their properties.
- Take advantage of natural topography and vegetation to reduce visual and audio effects.
- Identify private property on trail maps.

Solutions to conflicts will be developed on a case-by-case analysis.

CONCESSIONS AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

CONTEXT: The National Park Service must ensure that commercial operations within park units are appropriate and necessary, considering the availability of nearby services in local communities. When these basic needs cannot be met by others, the Park Service is authorized to provide products or services to visitors through the use of concessioners. Four concessioners currently operate within Cape Cod National Seashore — the Herring Cove Beach refreshment stand in Provincetown, the Highland Golf Links in Truro, the youth hostel in Truro, and the Nauset Knoll Motor Lodge in Orleans.

These commercial establishments all existed before 1961, when the national seashore was authorized. Some towns also have agreements with concessioners at town-owned beaches within the boundaries of the national seashore (primarily snack stands and a boat rental at Gull Pond).

A relatively new concession mechanism has been created to enhance historic preservation opportunities — the historic property lease / concession authority allows the government to lease properties and to have the payments be directed to the maintenance of the historic property rather than being returned to the general treasury.

- **GOAL: Provide the minimum commercial services that are necessary to adequately serve the public and that are not otherwise provided outside national seashore boundaries.**

STRATEGIES: *Concessions not meeting NPS requirements or management needs* — Concession operations will need to meet NPS policy requirements or provide for alternative management needs, or they will be phased out. Efforts will be made to continuously monitor and improve existing concessions to ensure that high-quality services are provided to the public.

Upon expiration of the concession contract for the Nauset Knoll Motor Lodge, this property may be considered for reuse for other purposes. The Park Service will work with the town of Orleans to plan for future public uses of the motor lodge. Opportunities for interpretation and educational experiences for the public will be explored, such as an environmental education program (see page 66). Any change of use that will generate adverse traffic impacts will not be considered. If the Park Service decides not to use the motor lodge property, national seashore managers will consider working with the town of Orleans to help them use the property for municipal purposes. This may include giving the town the first opportunity (as allowed by law and policy) to acquire the structure or the real estate, possibly using a land exchange.

Beach concession operations — Limited food items (snack and beverage vending machines) may be considered at some beaches to better serve visitors using shuttles, walking, or biking. This will occur when beach parking areas are reduced in size and moved farther from beaches because of coastal erosion. Any vending machines deemed necessary will be placed with other public service facilities, such as restrooms and trash/recycling receptacles.

Public transportation concessions or permits — Concessions or other commercial permits will be considered to provide public transportation to select destinations within the national seashore.

Historic property lease / concession operation — Selected properties will be made available for a historic property lease or concession operation. The concessioner's payments to the government will be directed to the preservation of the historic property rather than being returned to the general treasury as is done with other concessioner payments. These new historic property lease / concession arrangements will be put in place to operate and maintain historic properties suitable for commercial activity and for upkeep by others, as specified in the agreements. For example, a concession operation at the Highland Light complex will provide guide service and souvenir sales, and a concession operation could manage some of the dune shacks in the Peaked Hill Bars Historic District to provide for short-term rental occupancy. The Highland Golf Links contract is being converted from a conventional concession to this type of historic property lease / concession operation.

Commercial activities — Commercial activities that originate and end outside national seashore boundaries; for example, within the national seashore bus tours and boat rentals will be managed through licenses, special agreements, or incidental business permits to ensure consistency and appropriate use. Permit conditions will establish expectations for services and resource preservation.

NOTE: The 10 privately owned commercial businesses that existed before the national seashore was established are discussed under "Nonfederal Lands within the National Seashore"

VISTA MANAGEMENT

CONTEXT: When Cape Cod National Seashore was established 35 years ago, views, vistas, and overlooks were common throughout the area's rolling terrain because there were few stands of mature forest to block the panoramas. Many of the vistas were a direct result of centuries of cutting forests to create farmland or to provide fuel and construction materials. After the national seashore was established, facilities such as the Salt Pond and Province Lands visitor centers and bicycle trails were located to take advantage of these expansive views. However, in the interim many areas of forest cover have regenerated, obscuring the earlier vistas.

Except for open areas like cliffs, coastline, and unforested dunes, panoramic views on Cape Cod generally require frequent maintenance because of the rolling landscape. Present vista management practices range from mowing grass, to removing tree limbs, to clearing trees. Without specific guidelines for managing vistas, efforts to maintain attractive views could be sporadic, and possibly misguided.

- ☐ **GOAL:** Provide access to views that occur naturally in open areas; maintain vistas only to meet cultural landscape objectives, operational/safety needs, or interpretive needs that cannot be met elsewhere.

STRATEGIES: *Vista management plan* — Priorities will be set for vista maintenance throughout the national seashore to contain costs and environmental impacts. A vista management plan will be developed, in consultation with local communities and interested parties, to accomplish the following:

- Identify specific views to be preserved for historical significance, interpretive programs, or for reasons that influenced the placement of an associated facility; establish priorities for maintaining these views. In areas where facilities such as parking areas and vista points have been developed exclusively to take advantage of panoramic views that have since been eliminated by forest/vegetative succession, either (1) reestablish the original views, (2) adapt the facilities to the current views (with views provided into the forest as it matures), or (3) relocate the facilities. Because views at visitor centers are essential to the visitor experience, maintain them in the same manner as for significant cultural landscapes.
- Define acceptable routine vegetation maintenance practices, such as tree limb removal; remove or clear vegetation only in prescribed areas.
- Prescribe how frequently vistas will be maintained, consistent with management zoning.
- Evaluate former, existing, and potential vistas to determine their appropriateness and the feasibility of maintaining them.

Criteria for new vistas — Any new vistas, such as trails, road turnouts, and low-profile viewing platforms designed exclusively to provide scenic views, would be provided where possible in open landscapes (for example, coastal bluffs, open dunes, cultural landscapes, or heathlands). Any new viewpoints will be developed in accordance with the seashore's management zoning plan, the vista management plan, public safety measures, and the following considerations:

- Will the vista provide a unique visitor experience?

- Will the viewpoint be a designed vista or one created as part of a cultural landscape?
- Will a high degree of manipulation be required to maintain the vista?
- Will the vista be near public access?
- Will the vista be cost-effective in terms of development, maintenance, and the number of potential viewers?
- Will the surrounding resource area be capable of withstanding vista development and maintenance activities?
- Will the vista be compatible with the management zone for this site?